



CHATEAU MONTELENA

ESTABLISHED 1882

50th Anniversary Chardonnay

Notes from the Winemaker, Matt Crafton

INTRODUCTION

The idea for this wine emanated from a moment of personal reflection, amidst a serendipitous conversation with Bo Barrett that meandered between where we've been and where we're going. With the 50th Anniversary of Barrett Stewardship approaching, why not create a Chardonnay that embodies the family's gratitude and legacy? Far from a replica of years past, we set out to reimagine the foundation that galvanized our success. In many ways this wine is an anachronistic throwback: a blend of three tremendous vineyards that undoubtedly stand on their own. However, in the modern pursuit of viticultural purity, it's easy to overlook their synergies, palpable only after time. The result is a gorgeous wine that combines all of what we've learned at Montelena in the last half century, but explored through the nuanced lens of these distinct vineyards and regions.

VINTAGE WEATHER

The growing season in 2020 heralded a classic, excellent vintage for Chardonnay. Across Oak Knoll, Russian River Valley and Alexander Valley, the weather was serene. Despite the logistical challenges emanating from the tragic wildfires at the end of season, we harvested each vineyard safely and securely, absent of any deleterious effects. Amidst the uncertainty, it would have been tempting to shelve this project, a victim of unforeseeable and unexpected events. Instead, we trusted our instinct and technical acumen, understanding that the obstacles in our path make the journey worthwhile. We're very happy we made the decision to persevere as we successfully captured all the beauty of this vintage.

NOSE

Brimming with fresh flowers, hazelnut and toast, the aromatics in this wine straddle clarity and complexity. While the green apple and Asian pear are quite familiar, there's a spicy ginger note and a touch of fresh lemongrass that are incredibly inviting. Additionally, there's a hint sweet pineapple, although the nose overall remains quite traditional.

PALATE

Silky and rich, the texture is both lush and laser focused. Nestled in among the cinnamon, caramel and toasted almond is a rush of citrus: lemon oil, orange rind and bright acid. The midpalate is lifted by fresh baked bread, vanilla and apricot.

FINISH

The palate apexes into the finish with beautiful minerality, a touch of mint and white pepper. The breadth of the wine is quite evident here, lingering over time.

Technical Information

HARVEST DATES

August 22–25

ALCOHOL

14.1%

BLEND

100% Chardonnay

BARREL AGING

14 months in French oak followed by 5 months in stainless steel

BOTTLING DATE

March 23, 2022

VINEYARD SOURCES

John Muir Hanna Vineyard,
Napa Valley
Bacigalupi Vineyards,
Russian River Valley
Belle Terre Vineyard,
Alexander Valley

WINEMAKER

Matt Crafton